Raid to stop inflation and hoarding

†1730. SHRI MOTILAL VORA:
SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of businessmen raided in last one and half years to stop inflation and hoarding;

(b) the name of States in which inquiry has been conducted by the Department under 'stock limit' scheme of the Central Government; and

(c) the benchmark fixed for storage and whether that has been implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) The enforcement of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 lies with the State Government/ Union Territories. The State Governments/UT Administrations have been delegated powers to take necessary action under the provisions of both "The Essential Commodities Act, 1955" and "The Prevention of Blackmarketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980", to prevent mal-practices in essential commodities. There has been regular interaction by Government of India with the State Governments and they have been requested to use these powers effectively. Some State Governments have taken action and reported detentions under the Prevention of Blackmarketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980. The total number of detentions in 2009 (upto 31.10.2009) is 126. The number of raids under the provisions of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 conducted, as reported by various State Governments during the year 2008 were 268775 and during 2009 (Upto 31.10.2009) is 111367.

(b) and (c) No inquiry has been conducted by this Department as there is no such provision. The State Governments/UTs have fixed the stock limits as per their requirement. As per information furnished by the State Government/UT Administrations 23 State Governments/UTs have either issued stock limits for all the six items or for individual items or have issued only licensing requirements/stock declaration (of these 23, 18 States/UTs have actually issued stock limit Orders; 5 States/UTs have issued licensing requirements/stock declarations).

Rottening of foodgrains at godowns in Punjab

†1731. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:
SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

---

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) the quantum of foodgrains that got rotten in godowns of various food agencies in Punjab since the year 2006;

(b) whether the foodgrains had been procured for the purpose of export;

(c) the reasons for not exporting the foodgrains;

(d) the time period after which foodgrains starts decaying in godowns; and

(e) the reasons for decaying of foodgrains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) Negligible quantity of foodgrains stored by Food Corporation of India had got rotten in Punjab since 2006. A quantity of 54,007 tons of foodgrains had been damaged in Punjab due to various reasons, such as, heavy rains, floods, acceptance of below specifications stocks and movement to other regions from April, 2006 to October, 2009.

(b) Foodgrains had been primarily procured for distribution under Public Distribution System (PDS) and other welfare schemes of the Government. However, a small quantity of foodgrains is exported for diplomatic reasons. 6.5 lakh tons of wheat flour (Maida), Samolina (Rava/Sirgi), Wholemeal atta and resultant atta has been permitted for export upto 31st March, 2010.

(c) Keeping in view the requirements of the country, the Government has not allowed export of foodgrains except for small quantities mentioned in part (b).

(d) and (e) There is no fixed time period after which foodgrains start decaying in godowns. Decaying of foodgrains in godowns depends upon a number of factors, such as, moisture content of foodgrains, type of godown, storage conditions and steps taken for preservation and maintenance of foodgrains. Besides, insects, fungi and rodents infestation are the other reasons for decaying of foodgrains during storage.

The following effective steps are being taken for safe and proper storage of foodgrains in the godowns:

(i) Godowns are constructed as per specifications.

(ii) Foodgrains are stored by adopting proper scientific code of storage practices.

(iii) Adequate dunnage materials, such as, wooden crates, bamboo mats, polythene sheets are used to check the migration of moisture from the floor.

(iv) Fumigation covers, nylon ropes, nets and insecticides for control of stored grain insect pests are provided in all the godowns.

(v) Prophylactic (spraying of insecticides) and curative treatments (fumigation) are carried out regularly and timely in the godowns for the control of stored grain insect pests.

(vi) Rat control measures, both in covered godowns as well as in CAP storage are taken.

(vii) Regular periodic inspections of the stocks/godowns are undertaken by the technical staff.

(viii) The principle of "First in First Out" (FIFO) is followed to the extent possible so as to avoid longer storage of foodgrains in godowns.

Government's directions to check hoarding

1732. SHRI N.K. SINGH:
SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has in the recent past directed to State Governments to come down heavily on hoarders who try to earn profit from the reduced foodgrains production;

(b) if so, whether the directions of Government had any impact on State Governments to check hoarding of foodgrains by hoarders;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether inspite of directions by Government to check hoarding of foodgrains, it remain ineffective; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (e) the enforcement of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 lies with the State Governments/Union Territories. The State Governments/UT Administrations have been delegated powers to take necessary action under the provisions of both "The Essential Commodities Act, 1955" and "The Prevention of Blackmarketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980", to prevent mal-practices in essential commodities.

Directions have been given to states/UTs from time to time to take necessary actions under both the Acts to prevent hoarding and smuggling. Recently a Chief Secretaries conference had been held on 08.08.2009 wherein *inter alia* the need to implement the stock control orders had been emphasized by Secretary (CA). Secretary (CA) had written to all the Chief Secretaries *vide* letter dated 03.08.2009 requesting them to send action taken reports on Essential Commodities Act regularly and also reiterated the need to fix stock limits where Central Government had issued orders and also to enforce them strictly. In continuation of this letter the Hon'ble Minister had also written to all the Chief Ministers *vide* his letter dated 23.09.2009. Hon'ble Minister had also convened a meeting of all Food Ministers on 16.08.2009 in which these issues were discussed.

Regular interactions have been had with the State Governments/UTs. Some State Governments have taken action and reported detentions under the Prevention of Blackmarketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980. The number of detentions as